

NEWS RELEASE
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**ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURES IN EDUCATION TOUTED AS PROMISING
MODELS FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION**

*Corporate Partnered Schools, Coca-Cola Mentoring Project and P-16 Partnerships Highlighted
During Visit to Atlanta High School*

ATLANTA, GA – (September 19, 2000) – Alternative structures in education are effective and should be considered for addressing challenges in education. That is the message from a field hearing held today at William H. Grady High School in northeast Atlanta. The hearing was sponsored by the National Education Goals Panel and followed an extensive site visit and interview held with students from Grady's magnet program in communications.

The Goals Panel convened the field hearing in Atlanta to examine if and how alternative school structures are making a positive impact on standards-based education reforms. Members of the Panel discussed a variety of issues with the presenters, including:

- Pre-school through post-secondary partnerships (P-16) from Dr. Stephen Portch, Chancellor of the University System of Georgia;
- Pay for performance agreements for teachers from Dr. Allen Odden, Professor at the University of Wisconsin;
- Using school settings to address family needs from Dr. Robert Goodlett, Director of the Office of Family Resource & Youth Service in Kentucky, and Sharon Darling, President of the National Center for Family Literacy;
- Public schools located at the workplace from Susan Lehrman, Principal of Miami Springs Elementary School and the Miami International Airport Learning Center; and,
- Corporate partnered mentoring programs from Dr. Maria Robledo Montecel, Executive Director of the Intercultural Development Research Association, which developed the Coca Cola Valued Youth Program.

Earlier today, Governors Tommy Thompson (R-WI) and Paul Patton (D-KY), chair and former chair of the Goals Panel, and other members of the NEGP, met with a group of students from Henry W. Grady High School's communications magnet program. The Panel members

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were given a tour of the high school and the studio and broadcast facilities that are a part of the magnet program. After the tour, Thompson, Patton and other Panel members participated in a round table discussion on education issues and the present state of education reform with the students.

“I was very impressed with the sophistication of the students at Grady High School and its communications magnet program,” said Wisconsin Governor and Panel Chair Tommy Thompson (R). “We talked about the tough issues in education reform and those students really knew what they were talking about. This is some of the best feedback we have heard yet on how ten years of standards-based education reform is working for our children.”

During the field hearing itself, the members of the Panel and Georgia Governor Roy Barnes (D) – who is not a member of the Panel – heard testimony that highlighted promising alternative education structures from throughout the Southeast. Panel members will incorporate the testimony given today into a final report that will be released in December of 2000 that will provide policy recommendations and calls for actions based, in part, on what was learned during the site visit and field hearing.

“The challenge facing educators and policymakers alike is building the capacity within our educational systems to realize the vision of standards-based reform” said Governor Paul Patton (D-KY) a former chair of the Goals Panel. “The innovations we heard about and the innovators we heard from today will help us meet the challenges ahead. The objectives of the Goals Panel is to share this information with all those who are seeking solutions.”

Webcasts of the various presentations will be posted on-line at the National Education Goals Panel's web site: www.negp.gov. Also available on-line are webcasts of the two previous field hearings held in May and June and the April Goals Panel teleconference where the Panel launched its yearlong study.

“It is often said that no problem exists in education that has not been solved somewhere,” said Ken Nelson, executive director of the Panel. “This field hearing is part of a decade-long commitment by the Panel to find those solutions and encourage their adaptation by others across America. Certainly there is no one-size-fits-all solution, but there are very clear lessons we can learn from the programs we heard about today.”

The Goals Panel 2000 Agenda

Today's field hearing is part of a yearlong initiative entitled “High Achieving Schools: The Promise, The Practice, The Results” that focuses on standards-based reform. The initiative began in April with a national teleconference on Baldrige criteria and the application of other business practices in education. The first regional field hearing was held in May in Los Angeles. A second was held on June 1 in Burlington, Vermont. Other highlights of the National Education Goals Panel agenda for 2000 include:

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- Another regional hearing in Chicago (October 2) that will look at data reporting and analyses as tools to help all students achieve high standards;
- A final National Teleconference on December 6 that will engage the nation by clarifying what has been learned and will empower educators to build consensus around promising practices.

About the National Education Goals Panel

Created in July 1990, the National Education Goals Panel is a bipartisan body of federal and state officials made up of eight governors, four members of Congress, four state legislators and two members appointed by the president. To learn more about the Goals Panel, please visit www.negp.gov. The eight National Education Goals call for greater levels of: student achievement and citizenship; high school completion; teacher education and professional development; parental participation in the schools; literacy and lifelong learning; and safe, disciplined, and alcohol-and-drug-free schools. The Goals also call for all children to be ready to learn by the time they start school and for U.S. students to be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.

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